

sues. The panel consensus was that these programs have their place, but they may not be the answer if the goal is to improve students' decision-making skills.

Recurring themes in all the national defense acquisition education systems were the need to go from program inception to equipment fielding faster and cheaper, with fewer government employees; and the continued privatization of formerly government functions.

IDEA Board of Directors Convened

On Wednesday, June 27, the IDEA Board of Directors convened. Their agenda items included formal signature of the reformatted Charter, a review of the functional content of the Seminar, and recommendations for future seminars. The Board, sensing the need for a

theme-structured approach, recommended that the Seminars, in conjunction with the National Presentations, also include a theme selected by the IDEA member nations such as Contracting, Logistics, Export Licensing, or Offsets.

Delegates would be encouraged to submit comments and recommendations, and with the aid of case study materials in a workshop format, would review the issues raised in the case study materials and record their conclusions. The recorded conclusions would then become a "lessons learned" part of the *Comparative Acquisition Handbook*.

Although extremely busy, the Seminar was not all work. After hours, the delegates were formally welcomed to Mannheim, at a reception hosted by the

Deputy Lord Mayor, in the City's Art Museum. An evening walking tour of the ancient city of Speyer was organized, and participants enjoyed an informal dinner at the BAKWVT facilities.

Next Year – France

The 14th Annual International Acquisition/Procurement Seminar – Atlantic will be hosted by CHEAr, the Centre des Hautes Études de l'Armement, in Paris, France, during the last week of June 2002. The host will determine the Seminar theme with IDEA member concurrence. Watch for details of the Seminar in future issues of *Program Manager*.

Editor's Note: The author welcomes questions or comments on this article. Contact him at don.hood@dau.mil.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management Individual Learning Account (ILA) Pilot Program

The Federal Training Technology Task Force was established Jan. 12, 1999 by Executive Order 13111, "Using Technology to Improve Training Opportunities for Federal Government Employees." The Task Force was charged with developing a policy to "make effective use of technology to improve training opportunities for Federal Government employees." The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) invited agencies, including field and regional offices, to participate in an Individual Learning Account, or ILA Pilot Initiative. The OPM invitation and ILA guidance asked agencies to develop ILA plans, participate in piloting ILAs, and assist the Task Force in evaluating the effectiveness of ILAs for federal workers. Agencies, within the parameters provided in the guidance, were encouraged to structure their pilots using innovative models that best met their organizational needs.

Agencies are enthusiastic about this new development tool. Anecdotal feedback from employees and management indicate that ILAs provide a different and advantageous approach to training and development. The agencies overwhelmingly recommended the implementation of ILAs and continued OPM guidance and leadership in this effort. The pilot demonstrated that ILAs are indeed a feasible and practical approach to the 21st Century workforce needs of the Federal Government.

A report on the Individual Learning Account Pilot Program is now online at <http://www.opm.gov/hrd/lead/ILA/ilaprt.htm#Exec>.